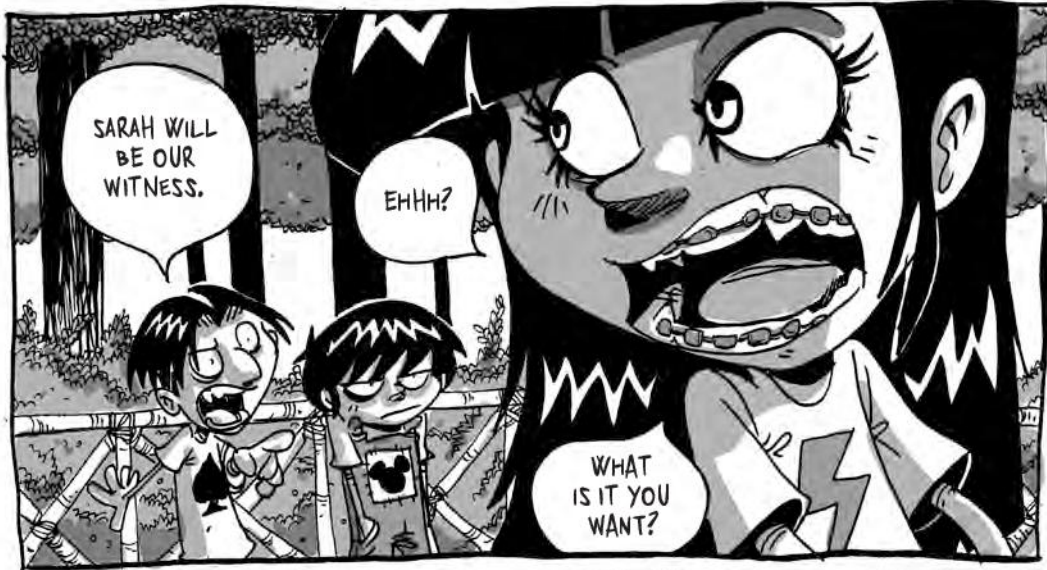


GOD ONLY KNOWS WHY WE USED TO TURN EVERYTHING INTO A BET IN THAT SCHOOL.
IT WAS A TRULY VOLTAIRE-ISH OBSESSION. MARIO SACCHI SAID
IT WAS PROBABLY BUILT ON AN ANCIENT INDIAN CASINO OR SOMETHING.





EQUAL MENFOLK, ACTING WITH THE NOBLEST OF INTENTIONS, WHO FREELY GET TOGETHER TO PURSUE A HIGHER INTEREST. ISN'T THAT HOW ADVENTURES BEGIN?



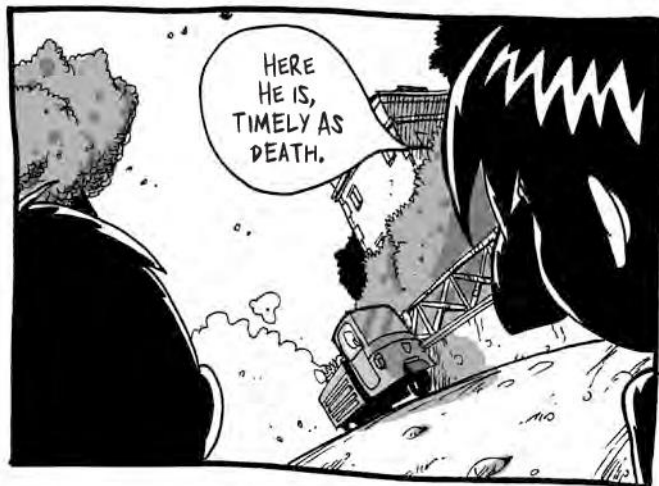


MY CONSCIENCE AT THE TIME COULD ONLY BE IN THE SHAPE OF DAVID THE GNOME, A WISE AND REASSURING FATHER-LIKE REFERENCE POINT DURING MY FORMATIVE YEARS.



(NO IDEA WHY I DIDN'T
CONSIDER THE MOST
LIKELY OPTION, THAT HAD
NOTHING TO DO WITH THE
OUTCOME OF THE BET.)

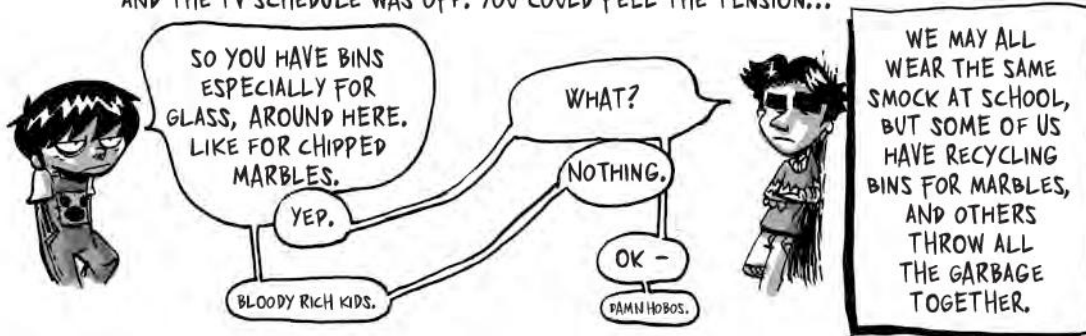


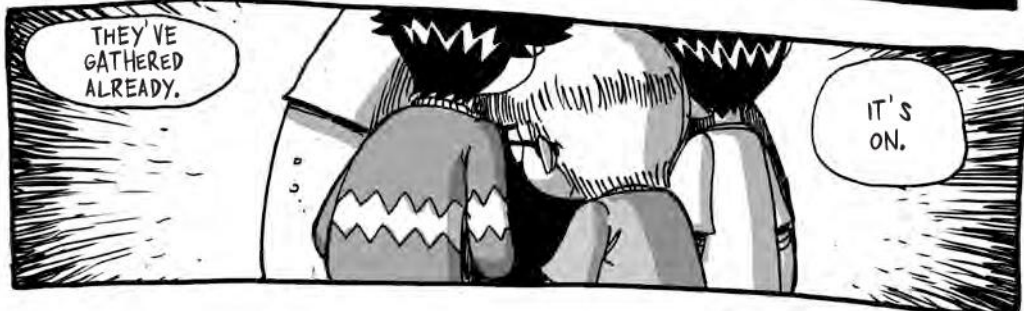


I TRIED TELLING MY MOTHER, CALMLY AND WITH REASON. STILL, SHE'S A SIMPLE SOUL, I CAN'T REALLY BLAME HER IF SHE DOESN'T GET IT...



WHAT ELSE WOULD I TALK ABOUT WITH SOMEONE LIKE EDUARDO? HE'S NOT EVEN A NEIGHBOUR. WE BUMPED INTO EACH OTHER DURING THE XMAS HOLIDAYS ONCE, AND THE TV SCHEDULE WAS OFF. YOU COULD FEEL THE TENSION...







SO WHAT DO YOU RECKON, ZERO?

DID YOU EXPECT HIM TO BE THE HIGH PRIEST?!



NO WAY! THEY REVEALED THE IDENTITY OF THE HIGH PRIEST!!!

I ONLY HAVE VAGUE IDEAS!

BASED ON ZILLIONS OF CLUES CLEVERLY SPREAD AMONGST 2429 EPISODES.

STILL, THEY'RE REALLY JUST IDEAS!

IF I DON'T ANSWER, THEY'LL GUESS, THOUGH!



YOUR TURN, ZEROCAL-CARE!

GO FOR IT, ZERO.

ONE ANSWER - ONE SYLLABLE.

IT'S YOUR PLACE IN THE PACK.

OR LIFE AS A REJECT.



HMMMM...

I'M HESITATING TOO MUCH! CORRADO'S LIKE A TRUFFLE DOG! HE SNIFFS OUT FEAR AND FEEDS ON IT!



SHOOT! SPOILED BLOODY CRY-BABY, SHOOT OR YOU'LL SCREW US ALL!





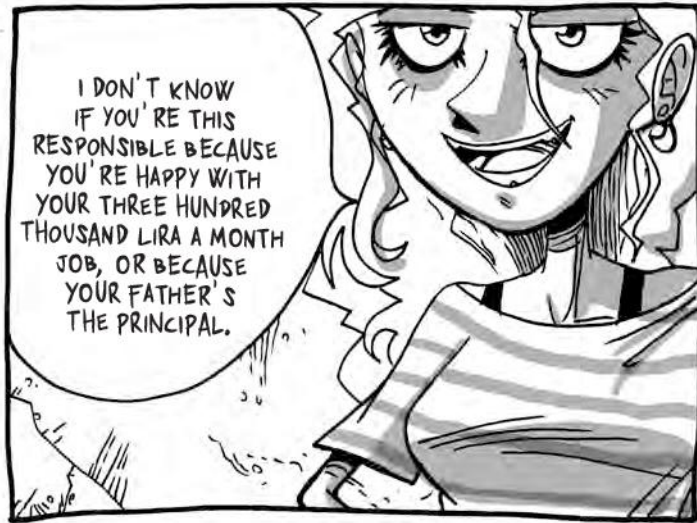
LOOKING BACK ON IT TODAY, I DON'T KNOW HOW I GOT OUT OF IT ALIVE. IT WAS LIKE DESCENDING INTO HELL EVERY MORNING. ONLY TO COME BACK UP IN THE AFTERNOON JUST IN TIME FOR MY SNACK AND THE AFTERNOON TV ANIMATED SERIALS





SIGH.
GOT IT,
ALEXANDRA.

I'LL
GO.



I DON'T KNOW
IF YOU'RE THIS
RESPONSIBLE BECAUSE
YOU'RE HAPPY WITH
YOUR THREE HUNDRED
THOUSAND LIRA A MONTH
JOB, OR BECAUSE
YOUR FATHER'S
THE PRINCIPAL.



A BIT
OF BOTH.

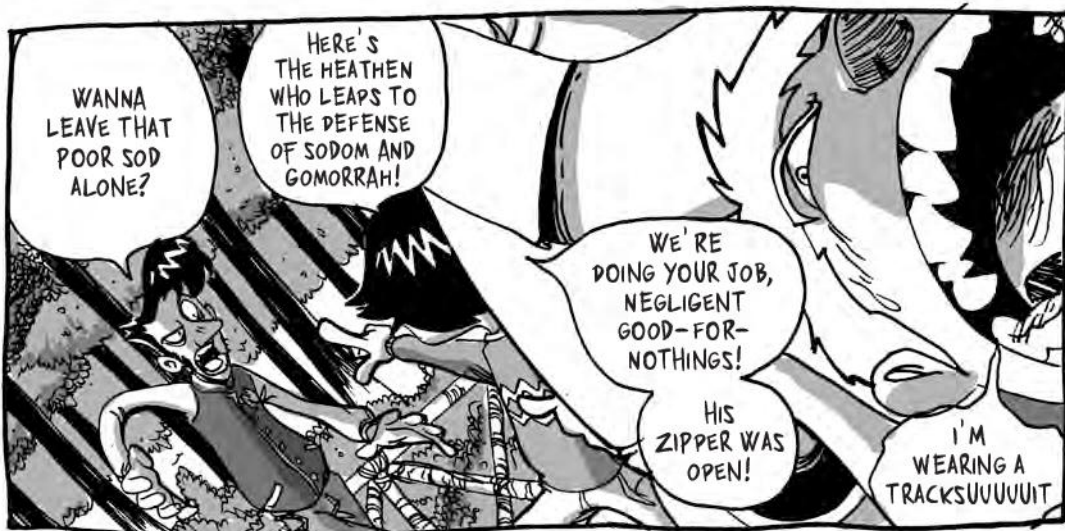
BESIDES,
I FEEL SORRY
FOR MONTINI.

WITH
HIS JUMPER
TUCKED INTO HIS
TROUSERS.

HEY, STEPH!



IF YOU COME
TO MY PLACE TONIGHT,
I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR JUST
REWARDS, DEFENDER OF
THE NERDS.



WANNA
LEAVE THAT
POOR SOD
ALONE?

HERE'S
THE HEATHEN
WHO LEAPS TO
THE DEFENSE
OF SODOM AND
GOMORRAH!

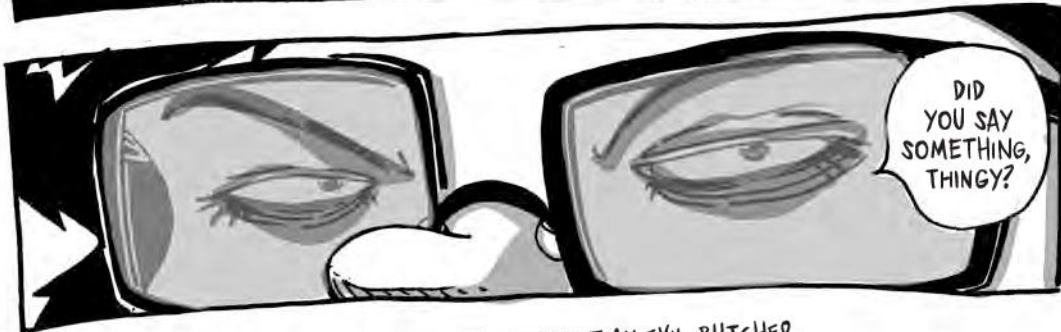
WE'RE
DOING YOUR JOB,
NEGLIGENT
GOOD-FOR-
NOTHING!

HIS
ZIPPER WAS
OPEN!

I'M
WEARING A
TRACKSUUUUUUIT

NOTHING IN THE VEGETABLE, MINERAL, ANIMAL OR MAN-IMAL KINGDOM HAS EVER MADE MY HEART BEAT FASTER THAN A GAME BOY. NOTHING.





MADAME ARBIZZATI. THE SHARP LOOK OF AN EVIL BUTCHER.



TO BE QUITE HONEST, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO REPEAT UNDER OATH THAT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT SHE SAID. STILL, IT WAS ALONG THOSE LINES. LIKE "LET ME WRITE YOU UP IN THE REGISTER" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.